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VOL. 4 NO. 13
FIRST ISSUE OF
JULY 1974
#87

RASH OF DERAILMENTS

NARP MAKES SPECIAL PLEA FOR FUNDS

The board of directors of the National Association of Railroad Passengers in a special mailing to members dated July 3, has requested additional donations to the organization in an attempt to keep it viable. Chairman Anthony Haswell, who has invested his personal funds and time without remuneration to the cause of promoting rail travel in the U.S., finds it financially impossible to continue without receiving a salary. NARP says that is must receive $33,000 by August 1 to avoid the closing of its Washington office. The communication asks that tax-deductible gifts be sent to NARP at 417 New Jersey Ave. S.E., Washington DC 20003.

RF&P MAKES IT "PERFECTLY CLEAR" IT WANTS TO SABOTAGE AMTRAK

Recent events make the RF&P railroad in the eyes of some rail travelers an enemy of the rail passenger--in the "public-be-damned" category along with MoPac and SP.

When you read this, the July 10 date for termination of RF&P/Amtrak trains into Washington Union Station will have passed, and we will know whether RF&P was able to make good its threat.

Regardless of the outcome of that dispute, RF&P has already successfully sabotaged Amtrak operations, say some, at the other end of its line. RF&P has sold the east portion of its passenger terminal trackage in Richmond, VA to the Virginia Division of Motor Vehicles. The DMV will construct an office building on the site. In one fell swoop, the RF&P transformed Broad St. Station from an efficient run-thru station into a stub-ended operating nightmare. Effective July 1, all Amtrak Florida trains began making a slow, dangerous two-mile backing move into the station. The backup move makes every southbound train about 15 minutes late at best. Northbound trains suffer less because the backing move involves less curvature and because they have more schedule padding. This sale of assets, some say, may be in direct violation of RF&P's Amtrak contract which calls for maintaining the "level of utility."

Other RF&P actions in the past include: lowering the speed limit for passenger trains from 80 to 70mph in early 1970, just after the Metroliners had p4oved the direct relationship between speed and patronage. This in spite of use of train control on the railroad... Ripping up its third main line south of Alexandria, VA in order to spite the Northern Virginia Transportaion Commission, which wished to use the RF&P for commuter trains.

The railroad now wants to slow down the schedules of all southbound Amtrak trains by 10 minutes.

PENN CENTRAL AND CONRAIL

A recent court ruling has dimmed the future of the Consolidated Railway Corporation--a June 25 panel found that parts of the legislation were unconstitutional. Penn Central this month indicated it would file an appeal against the ruling.

DIFFICULTIES IN FILMING RAILROAD MOVIE SCENES

The evening of July 2, Columbia Pictures was at the Amtrak station in Oakland, CA preparing to film movie scenes for a forthcoming film, "Funny Lady," starring Barbra Streisand. Filming was to begin upon departure of the day's last train, the northbound STARLIGHT, at 8:40. However, it happened that the SAN FRANCISCO ZEPHYR was over 9 hours late from Chicago, due to a freight derailment in the Midwest, and the film crew could not start until after its 12:15am arrival. Imagine the surprise of passengers seeing the station transformed into "Cleveland" upon their arrival.

Rail Travel Newsletter, Vol. 4, No. 13 (Whole No. 87), First Issue of July, 1974. Published twice monthly by Message Media, P.O. Box 9007, Berkeley, California 94709. Subscription $7.00 per year; single copy 30¢ (vol. 1-3, 25¢). STAFF: James Russell, Editor; Paul Rayton, Editor-at-Large; Kenneth Maylath, East Coast Correspondent; Peter Roehm, Northeastern Correspondent; Peter Putnam Bretz, Roving Correspondent; John Ferry, Midwestern Correspondent. Mailing date this issue: July 12, 1974.

THE COVER STORY

"ATTENTION ALL STATIONS" went the teletype. "DERAILMENT TRAIN 30 EX-KCY 7/4 AT JST (Johnstown) 7/5/74. 7/4 TRAIN DERAILED NEAR JST. PAX WILL BE BUSSED FROM DIRECT TO NYP..." The eastbound NATIONAL LIMITED had derailed early on July 5 in southwestern Pennsylvania, at a switching point halfway between Johnstown and Latrobe. Altho 150 passengers were aboard, none was reported injured, and no cars tipped over. All eight cars went off the track. Three crewmen in the kitchen of the train's diner were slightly injured as the car tossed them around. Passengers were bused to their destinations. Our cover photo is from Wide World Photos, and shows passenger Carrie Robson of St. Louis hauling her baggage from the scene of the wreck. This photo, placed on the AP wires, gained wide coverage across the nation and could become a classic railroad photo.

The same morning, at 5:02 Central Time, the eastbound SOUTHWEST LIMITED (nee SUPER CHIEF), derailed near Melvern, Kansas. It hit a broken rail, sending the last 13 of the 18 cars off the tracks. The last 6 cars--four sleepers, first class diner and lounge--went down a 50-foot embankment. Railroad officials were puzzled over the break in the track, which was heavy 136-pound welded rail. There were 385 passengers aboard, and 42 of them were treated at hospitals, 20 being admitted. There were reportedly no critical injuries, but a doctor aboard the train said he gave emergency aid to people with broken arms, a broken back and a head injury. The train with the underailed cars went on to Chicago, and passengers from the derailed equipment were bused on.

The SAN JOAQUIN, northbound from Bakersfield, CA on July 1, struck an automobile near Shafter, killing the three young women in it. The car reportedly tried to race the train to a crossing.

NEW AMTRAK ROUTES MADE KNOWN

***Just before the June 30 deadline, the Secretary of Transportation made known that his department has chosen the Chicago-Boston via Cleveland route for Amtrak's first new "experimental" route, required by legislation passed last year. This route had been heavily supported by passenger train lobbyists, and was the "winning" route in a survey made by RTN and published in our First February issue, 1974. The route must be serviced for a minimum of 2 years to determine its qualification for permanent status. Secretary Brinegar said that the route was chosen because it serves the "largest potential market" of those considred. The route will run thru Albany, Buffalo, Erie, Cleveland and South Bend. There is no definite startup date given for the new service. It is known that Amtrak favors using N&W tracks west of Buffalo rather than the PC route.

***A new route between Norfolk, VA and Cincinnati was also designated for experimental status by the DOT; actually the route was approved as part of an appropriations bill acted upon by Congress. Two million dollars were set aside for the new route, which is to run on the N&W from Norfolk to Canova, WV, where it goes onto the Chessie System, serving Bluefield, WV and Portsmouth, OH. Passenger trains on this route were eliminated when Amtrak took over in 1971. No startup date is given.

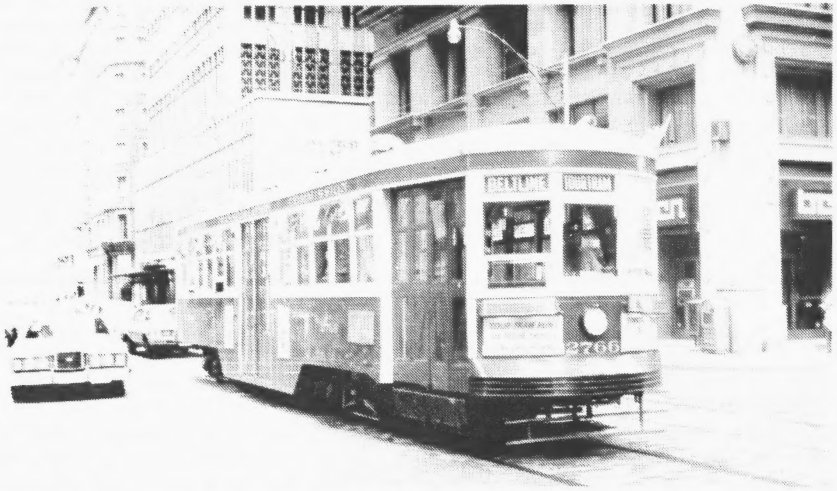
***A revival of the LAURENTIAN will become a reality soon--one startup date is given as August 14. The state of New York will pay 2/3 of the train's deficit. This will be a daylight run, probably leaving New York City in early morning for the run to Montreal on Delaware & Hudson rails. Equipment for the run is to be coaches retained by D&H when Amtrak took over, including 4 ex-EL cars; two Canadian Pacific diners; and as power two Alco PA units now being rebuilt, plus 2 Ferry-Morse engines to be obtained perhaps from Canadian National. MTA-owned coaches may be used as well.

NEW STOP FOR INTER-AMERICAN IS INDEFINITE

After announcing that Newport, Arkansas would be made a flag stop for the INTER-AMERICAN to test the possibility of having a full-fledged permanent stop there, Amtrak has apparently backed down and now is considering several Arkanasa locations for test stops for the recently-expanded run.

canadian news letter

THE OVERWHELMING VICTORY of Prime Minister Pierre Trudeau in Canada's July 8 election apparently means that the chance of his party's planned Canadian Passenger Transportation Corporation becoming a reality is greatly increased. The CPTC, as reported here last issue, would be an Amtrak-like corporation to take over ownership and operation of all intercity passenger trains in Canada. Canadian passenger trains have received government subsidy of 80% of losses since 1967 but service in recent years has seen some of the same problems of shrinkage that the United States experienced, and which led to the creation of Amtrak in the States. The CPTC would be part of a large transportation package which would include improvements in freight service, and in air service to remote areas, and would include building of new high-speed rail lines in selected "corridors."



A PETER WITT streetcar continues to be a summer tourist attraction in Toronto, here photographed by Ken Maylath. Toronto, with its many heavy, straight streetcar routes, would be an ideal location to run articulated streetcars. However, TTC brass nix the idea as "impractical." The real reason, insiders say, is that TTC doesn't want to rebuild the rail transfer table at its Hillcrest shops so it could handle the longer cars. Thus the 200 new cars expected soon will be of conventional length. In other transit news, the Hamilton, Ontario Street Railway has announced that it will add 25 trolley coaches to its existing fleet of 48. The new electrics will be used on a 4-mile extension of the system's heavy "King" line.

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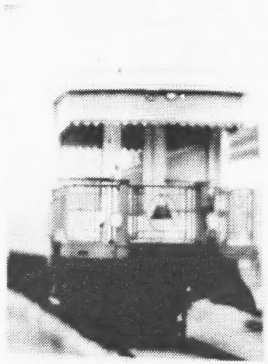

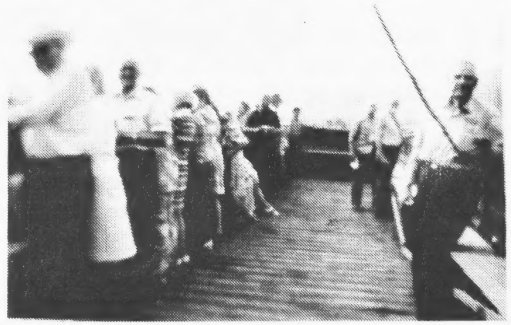

"SOONERLAND" Copper Canyon Open Gondola

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JANUARY 18 to FEBRUARY 2

YUCATAN AND THE "TRIP OF A THOUSAND WONDERS"

MARCH 1 to 16

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5. Spectacular TRIP OF A THOUSAND WONDERS in January.
6. COPPER CANYON & 89 tunnels and bridges in March.
7. Open gondola for the entire Chihuahua-Pacific trip.
8. MIDWEST TRAVEL'S "SOONERLAND" and "MISTLETOE".

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MIDWEST TRAVEL SERVICE

HOWARD B. THORNTON, DIRECTOR

2936F Bella Vista 732-0566 [405]

Midwest City, Oklahoma, 73110

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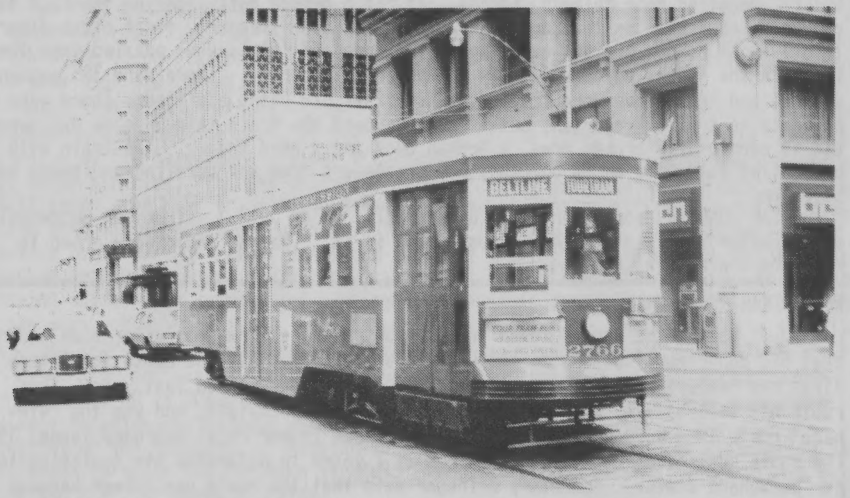

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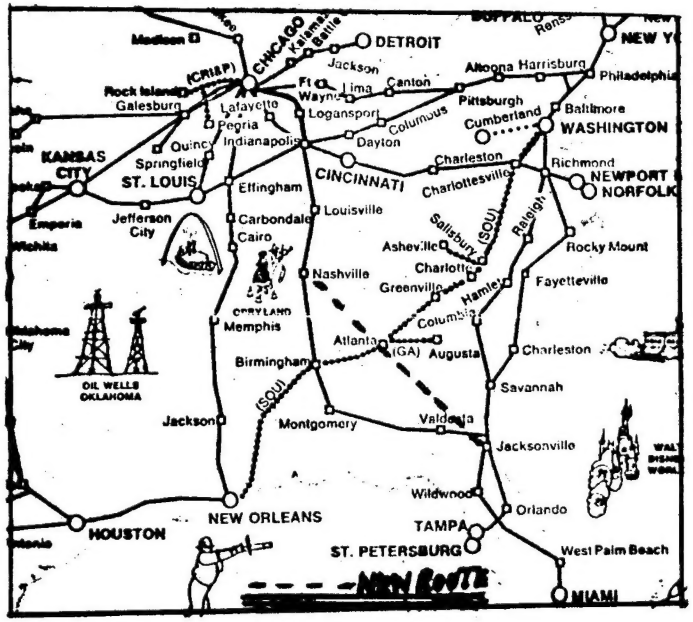
LET'S GET ATLANTA BACK ON THE TRACK WITH AMTRAK!

A group of rail travelers hailing from Tennessee, Georgia, and Florida are working towards getting Amtrak to split the FLORIDIAN at Nashville, with one section continuing on the present route via Birmingham, Montgomery, and Waycross to Florida, the new section would operate via Chattanooga to Atlanta, Macon, and Albany to Jacksonville (the Dixie Flyer route). Railroads utilized would be L&N - C of Ga. - SCL.



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ACROSS AMERICA ON Amtrak

Kenneth A. Maylath

IT'S BECOME RTN'S CUSTOM AT THIS TIME EACH YEAR TO REPORT AT LENGTH ON TRAVEL CONDITIONS ON AMTRAK TRAINS ACROSS THE COUNTRY AS THE BIG SUMMER SEASON GETS UNDERWAY. IN THE ARTICLE STARTING ON NEXT PAGE, KEN MAYLATH DESCRIBES A CROSS-COUNTRY AM-TREK IN MID-JUNE.

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Ken Maylath reports on a June (1974) Amtrak "round-the-country" trek (see also brief introduction at the top of the preceding page)

I am fresh back from a round-the-country rail trip, covering thousands of miles and many trains in the U.S., with a cross- Canada ramble thrown in for good measure. Before any details, a few basic observations:

While there may not be a host of dramatic improvements during the past year, things at least seem to be moving mostly in the right direction. I encountered no mixups in accommodations and endured no "horror" situations of the type which afflicted many passengers during the Christmas holiday period. Problems and irritations tended to be of the minor rather than major variety.

The expected crowds are there on most trains, particularly in the West. With two complete trains per day to the Pacific Northwest, the situation seemed a bit better getting space there compared to the more southerly routes across America. Making reservations more than a month in advance with the assistance of a travel agent knowledgable in rail travel, I found the toughest nut to crack (no surprise) was the COAST STARLIGHT. Some extra effort finally produced sleeper space, probably due to a cancellation.

Eating continues to be one of the best and most dependable things about riding Amtrak. Some menus have been in use a year or more--a plus for the passenger in that the prices are a year or more old.

In almost all cases employees aboard trains and at stations were average to outstanding in the way they performed. On-board supervisors are in evidence on most long distance runs. The biggest deficiency from a personnel point of view may well be among some maintenance forces--almost none of which are directly on the Amtrak payroll. In spite of reported efforts to check air conditioning systems before summer began, hot cars and defective electrical systems still seem to pop up in almost every consist. Not all of this can be blamed on old equipment and lack of shopping. (The DOT Amtrak report notes the almost non-existent bad-order ratio at Auto-Train.)

Poor on-time averages not withstanding, almost all Amtrak schedules are reasonable--indeed often on the overly padded side. I observed some rather definite examples of how on time performance can be achieved on long distance and corridor runs alike, given railroad cooperation and freedom from serious problems. Many trains can easily arrive AHEAD of schedule! Yet, track conditions often left something to be desired-and not just on railroads with no money in the bank. After bouncing along sections of SP and BN main trackage, I have to join the NARP and others in wondering whether proper maintenance of track could be taking a back seat to such things as diversification and real estate deals.

Things got underway late on a Friday afternoon as I boarded the Washington section of THE BROADWAY. My trip to Harrisburg was aboard a 60-seat former L&N coach. Then I switched to a slumbercoach originating in New York. Also in the consist: an ex-Nickel Plate bedroom lounge and 10-6 sleeper, plus baggage car. We lost a few minutes on the mainline to Perryville, but did quite well after swinging on to the scenic line along the Susquehanna River, arriving several minutes early in Harrisburg. The New York section wasn't doing as well--posted 30 minutes behind into the ancient station which also serves Trailways and Greyhound. The switching to combine the two sections went smoothly and we headed west as I settled into a slumber room and headed to the diner for a late meal.

It was 9 pm, but the 64 seats of the twin-unit facility were full and I had to wait several minutes. The roast beef was fine, but the same couldn't be said for the electrical system of the adjacent pub-type lounge. Its number assignment is so new and refurbishing so recent that it doesn't show up on 6 month old Amtrak equipment lists. Yet, no lights save a few tiny electric candles. This may have been fine for those desiring an intimate atmosphere for cocktails, but did nothing for the host of coach passengers who had to pass through it to the diner.

We held our own timewise to Pittsburgh at about 30 minutes down. When I awoke in the morning we were clicking into Western Ohio, now an hour late. Track work in the past year has improved the timekeeping and ride qualities between Pittsburgh and Crestline, but some lateness can still be expected over that stretch. If things have gone right into Pittsburgh, there's a fighting chance to reach Chicago just about on schedule. This, of course, wasn't one of those days.

It wasn't my plan to continue to the Windy City just then, in any event. The idea was to drop off in Ft. Wayne and leave there for Detroit by Greyhound after a 3-hour layover. After our hour-late arrival I photographed the 2 brand new Amtrak units powering THE BROADWAY with the help of an E unit, had some breakfast and headed to the bus station.

The bus got out of the terminal 45 minutes down after a rest stop and ambled into the Motor City 40 minutes behind. The old WABASH CANNONBALL, if still available, would have been more enjoyable.

My Detroit sidetrip was solely to sample Amtrak's Detroit-Chicago service--my first trip over the line. It is a route which has received minimum publicity but has enjoyed considerably increased patronage in the past year. When the gate opened for the 5:45 PM departure of the ST. CLAIR, a moderate crowd, not much over 50, filed aboard 4 coaches and a former SCL tavern-coach used for food service. Three consists cover the 2 daily round trips and this one was headed by a one-time NYC round-end observation car--running backwards since the equipment isn't turned in Detroit. It was nicely refurbished with airline style seats, and lounge seats in the round section. Two of the middle coaches suffered from air conditioning problems, but with the moderate passenger load they could be avoided without problem. (Loadings on corridor runs are generally rather light Saturday evenings and the ST CLAIR reaches Chicago too late to connect with anything.) A single E unit was assigned as power ahead of the observation car.

I expected generally slow speeds and bad track. Fortunately my expectations were conservative. The track maintenance wouldn't win many awards to be sure, but wasn't that bad, especially for the Penn Central. We generally moved along at 60 or above--reaching a full 79 on one stretch near Kalamazoo. The schedule seems padded for a corridor type run. If set up on a basis similar to Chicago-St Louis (about the same distance), the running time would be more like 5 1/2 rather than 5 3/4 hours.

Things got off to a rather bad start as we crawled along at 20 or 25 thru the Detroit suburbs, apparantly because of signal problems. Since the line goes right past Greenfield Village at Dearborn, I was able to get a closer look at it, including its steam-powered train. Ann Arbor, the first stop, already 15 minutes behind. A good crowd boarding. On to Jackson, Battle Creek, Kalamazoo, gaining time at each station. By the time we reached Niles, last stop before Chicago, we had made up the entire quarter hour with a couple of minutes to spare. And in spite of more signal problems leaving Niles, we still reached Chicago over 5 minutes early.

While equipment on the run has improved under Amtrak, let's hope that a couple of the Turbos now on order will go on the Detroit run early next year, with an improved schedule, to help exploit the considerable potential of the corridor.

The next leg of the journey allowed me to sample the French Turbos for a second time. Until this spring the 8:10 St. Louis departure from Chicago was conventional equipment on weekends. Now, the schedule is filled by the new trains which get a day off in the middle of the week instead. The schedule was set up for a conventional train-with 30 extra minutes and 3 extra stops. No real challenge for a Turbo, which is allowed 79 MPH for most of the trip, compared with 75 for conventional runs. We had a good Sunday morning load out of Chicago, with a sizeable crowd waiting at Joliet. Into Bloomington with a couple of minutes to spare--time enough for a quick wipe of the engineer's windshield. I sampled one of the quickly heated breakfasts which I found to be fairly decent in spite of complaints from those accustomed to full dining service on the route. Then, I've been stuck with Northeast Corridor snack cars much of the time in recent years where eggs and pancakes, even the pre-cooked variety, are just a dream. The ride quality--quite good--with slightly better track north of Springfield than south of there.

Our meet with the northbound morning train, also a Turbo, took place as scheduled on the north side of Bloomington. Our only problem was the loss of a few minutes south of Springfield because of signal difficulties. That knocked us nearly 10 minutes behind schedule but this was made up into St. Louis since the timetable allows for a back-in move to the St. Louis terminal not necessary

(continued on page 12)

thoughts of mixed trains

by Gil Hulin

With the advent of Amtrak three years ago, creating one company to operate passenger trains and leaving many railroads with only freight trains to run, the opportunity for that hybrid of rail transportation, the mixed train, became considerably less frequent. Even so, the number of mixed trains still roaming the rails of North America is sufficient to entertain any dedicated train rider if he knows where to look.

The basic concept of the mixed train is honorable in this conservation-minded era. If a particular route has too small a traffic potential to warrant regular passenger service, but still produces a minimal demand for service, then the addition of one or two coaches to a freight train can provide the basic transportation without greatly increasing fuel consumption or crew expenses.

The term "mixed train" basically means a train hauling both freight and passengers, but in operation and appearance mixed trains vary greatly. Some mixed trains operate as local freights, switching boxcars at every small town, while others are primarily passenger trains with through freight cars added. The passenger car or cars may be at the head end or at the rear, with or without a caboose in addition. In some cases there may not be a passenger car at all, with the occasional infrequent passenger actually accomodated in the caboose.

Amtrak's national schedules make brief reference to mixed trains even though Amtrak could not possibly operate such consists itself. In listing connecting rail service, the timetable names Georgia Railroad's Atlanta-Augusta trains 103-104 "MIXED" and adds a footnote: "Mixed service also operated by Georgia Railroad between Athens and Union Point, Barnett and Washington, and Macon and Camak."

It is well known that another Amtrak connection, Southern Railway, adds through piggyback cars to its Washington-Atlanta PIEDMONT, and Washington-Lynchburg trains 7-8. The timetables make no mention of these trains as mixed, however.

Such practice is nothing new. Prior to Amtrak Union Pacific operated a variety of mixed trains including several that seemed to be pure passenger consists in the timetable. SPOKANE trains 19-20 between Spokane and Hinkle, Ore., and PORTLAND ROSE remnants 117-118 between Denver and Kansas City spent their last years with up to 50 assorted freight cars tacked on behind the head end coach and baggage equipment. A caboose brought up the rear of these trains.

UP trains 93-94 between North Platte, Neb., and South Torrington, Wyo., however, were identical in appearance, but advertised as mixed for decades. These trains received some publicity as the last mixeds with a Railway Post Office, when, on May 22, 1964, the North Platte & Gering R.P.O. was discontinued.

By contrast, Burlington Northern's 14 months of passenger operation between merger and Amtrak found the road with but a single mixed train. This was SP&S subsidiary Oregon Trunk's six-times-a-week local between Bend, Ore., and Wishram, Wash., that was best known for transporting fishermen to remote holes along the Deschutes River canyon. The Oregon Trunk mixeds carried a heavyweight combine on the rear that in later years sported homemade bay windows for the car's dual role of caboose as well as coach.

Among American Class 1 railroads currently operating mixed consists, Georgia Railroad and Southern Railway appear to be alone. Non-Amtrak Rio Grande and Rock Island have not been involved in such service at all in recent years, but a handful of shortlines do cater to passengers to supplement the Southeastern service.

In the Southwest, Arizona's Tucson, Cornelia & Gila Bend Railroad carries passengers between Ajo and Gila Monday through Friday, while in Texas the Moscow, Camden & San Augustine Railroad also runs a five-day-a-week mixed between Camden and Moscow.

In the Northeast, remaining mixed train service is provided by a pair of steam excursion railroads. New York's Livonia, Avon & Lakeville Railroad connects Livonia and Avon, while Pennsylvania's New Hope & Ivyland Railroad similarly connects towns of the same name.

Perhaps the best known steam-powered mixed train was that of Arkansas' Reader Railroad, which suspended all service in December, 1972, when the line's largest freight shipper, an asphalt plant, closed.

Earlier in 1972 another mixed train operation came to an end when Colorado's Great Western Railway became freight-only. Through April 19 of that year passengers were carried in the shortline's caboose, with maximum fare for a roundtrip of up to 100 miles (depending upon the number of branchlines switched) only $1.16.

The rail enthusiast who wants to ride a mixed train today will find Canada the last stronghold in North America, with Canadian National alone operating more mixed consists than all U.S. railroads combined. CN in 1974 has at least 14 pairs of mixed trains in six provinces, with frequencies ranging from daily (Badger-Deer Lake, Newfoundland) to once a week (Dauphin-Winnipegosis, Manitoba). Most runs are tri-weekly, however, often covering a branch three days a week in one direction and returning the following three days.

CN

CN mixed trains on Newfoundland's narrow gauge, in addition to the Badger-Deer Lake run, connect St. John's and Argentia, Brigus Junction and Carbonear, and Clarenville and Bonavista. In Quebec, the lone schedule connects Quebec City and Riviere-a-Pierre. CN mixed trains in Ontario operate between Hearst and Nakina, Hornepayne and Manitouwadge, and Thunder Bay and Sioux Lookout.

Manitoba boasts the largest number of CN mixeds, with most operating on the sparsely-populated Hudson Bay division. End points include The Pas and Lynn Lake, Flin Flon and Osborne Lake, and Wabowden and Churchill, in addition to the previously mentioned Dauphin-Winnipegosis train. A fifth CN mixed runs from the town of Hudson Bay, Man., west to Prince Albert, Sask.

In the West, CN's only remaining mixed train connects Prince George and McBride, B.C. In Alberta CN runs RDCs on several branch lines instead of mixed trains, but the province nevertheless has its share of mixed consists in the form of a quartet of Northern Alberta Railway locals between Edmonton, Lac La Biche and Fort McMurray/Waterways.

Other non-CN mixed trains in Canada inslude shortline consists on the Greater Winnipeg Water District and Canada & Gulf Terminal, Cochrane-Moosonee service on Ontario Northland's northernmost route, and a Windsor-Truro, N.S., local on CP Subsidiary Dominion Atlantic.

Canadian Pacific proper apparently got out of the mixed train business in September of 1973 when the once-or twice-weekly freights between North Battleford, Meadow Lake and Prince Albert, Sask., stopped carrying passengers. The North Battleford-Meadow Lake train over CN trackage has since been discontinued entirely.

Two of the trains mentioned, CN's Lynn Lake-The Pas run and ONR's Cochrane-Moosonee POLAR BEAR, are noteworthy in their inclusion of dining facilites with hot food service, a distinction shared perhaps only with Southern's PIEDMONT, if the latter is considered a true mixed train.

The POLAR BEAR includes as many as eight passenger and express cars on the rear of 30-some freight cars, in contrast with the many mixed trains that haul but one seldom-used combine coach, which on the CN is usually at the rear of the train just ahead of a separate caboose.

What is the future for mixed trains in North America? In a sense, Auto-Train and its planned Amtrak imitators are mixed consists. If this reasoning is valid, then more and better publicized mixed trains may be on their way.

But the traditional jack-of-all-trades local that stops to set out boxcars at one town and pick up reefers at the next will survive primarily on the least traveled branches that can support but one train of any kind. Rail travel enthusiasts who want to ride these locals will have to study timetables other than Amtrak's and be willing to spend the larger part of a day going nowhere.

Readers who know of any other U.S. or Canadian mixed train overlooked in this article are invited to send notice of the train's existance to the editor.

(continued from page 9)

with a Turbo. Thus, we eased to a stop at 1:40--on time to the minute. A red-jacketed Amtrak man helping at the doors of the turbo was headed for his stint as on-board supervisor for the INTER-AMERICAN.

The INTER-AMERICAN--a run more than doubled in length last March when extended from Ft. Worth thru Dallas to St. Louis. I was particularly interested in sampling the new portion, though not expecting a duplication of the SOUTHWEST LIMITED in equipment, passenger loads or speed. Another case where the beginning of the trip turned out to be a downer.

It came as little surprise when the chronically late NATIONAL (powered by brand new diesels) was still in the St. Louis station as our Turbo pulled in from Chicago. Cutting off one of the two units and other servicing consumes much more than the alloted 20 minutes, putting it about 3 hours late into the final portion of its journey to Kansas City. Its tardiness apparently put the station forces behind the 8 ball in getting the INTER-AMERICAN ready to roll on its thrice-weekly way. Last minute preparations coupled with an equipment problem or two delayed the opening of the gate until the scheduled departure time of 3.15. By that time a crowd of well over 100 had gathered to pile aboard the 3 52-seat coaches, ex SCL full length diner (unreburbished) and former CB&Q sleeper.

We finally got moving at 3:37--almost 25 minutes late. But we didn't move very far. We ground to a halt just a couple of miles from the station at a rail junction, and sat for a full half hour. Not even clear of the St. Louis city limits and already virtually an hour to the bad! By that time the train crew had calmed the irate first-time Amtrak traveler, upset because his family was assigned to a pair of bedrooms lacking en suite provisions. At that point it seemed that things had to get better, and they did. The slow running needed to clear the city at an end, we clicked along at 50 or so beside the Mississippi, then thru the rolling hills of Southeast Missouri on constantly curving track. Someone handed out nice promotional booklets extolling the

virtues of the state. Dinner was without problem in the well patronized diner (still using the same somewhat limited menu from the days when the train ran only between Ft. Worth and the border.) No snowy linens and fancy table settings, either. At least the capacity was significantly greater than in the counter-diner-lounge regularly used until the summer.

We got into Poplar Bluff a full hour late and surprisingly stayed for 15 minutes while the cars were watered--less than 4 hours from St. Louis. It didn't make much difference because we waited several more minutes in the yards for an inbound freight to clear the single track line from Little Rock. Hills gave way to flat Arkansas territory noted for rice and ducks as we really started to move. Mileposts clicked by at the rate of 75 to 80 mph. Some slow running around Corning, Arkansas, then more fast running on smooth welded rail. The Missouri Pacific may not be a big Amtrak booster and often posts artificially low speeds, but is one railroad which believes in decent track maintenance. In spite of a minor delay or two, the 185 miles from Poplar Bluff to Little Rock disappeared in a like number of minutes--3 hours 5 minutes compared to a schedule allowance of 3:40. Seventy minutes down out of Poplar--35 minutes late into the Arkansas capital. Talk about padding! (Much local business at both of those first two pauses in our INTER-AMERICAN journey.)

Another sunny morning as my shade went up around 7 am. We flashed thru Terrell an hour or so east of Dallas, where we were due at 7:30. Our arrival came 35 minutes behind--the same story as departure from Little Rock. A refurbished platform for Amtrak and workmen already on the job for the day as work progresses on transformation of Union Station into a transportation center by the city.

By all odds we were going to be out of town in a hurry, gaining more time to Ft. Worth. But no--a red signal at the throat of the station trackage. It took a half hour and a couple calls to the dispatcher on a trackside phone to get moving--55 late again. But, the short hop to Ft. Worth took 45 minutes against the 65 alloted. There a reversing of the engines (a pair of E units) and servicing. It took 30 minutes, exactly the time allowed, and #21 whistled out to the south 35 minutes behind.

Some impressions: An hour or more could come out of the schedule. (insuring a good southbound connection to Mexico) with some sharper operating practices and better cooperation from the MoPac. On a run of over 24 hours separate lounge space would be highly desirable--such as the addition of a double bedroom lounge as a second sleeper. The train leaves the impression of being an expanded shorter run, which it is, rather than a full-fledged long distance rail link. Even a dome coach would be a considerable plus.

Next, the LONE STAR--after several hours in Ft. Worth--if. If it was on time, giving reasonable assurance that the 1-hour connection to THE SUNSET in Houston could be accomplished. And on time it was, in Santa Fe tradition-indeed a couple of minutes early. New units 518 and 524 heading a baggage car, a trio of high level coaches, lounge, diner, 10-6 sleeper and, to add the finishing touch, one of those ex-CZ dome-sleeper-observation cars. Lounge-type seating replaces the coach-type seats in the dome.

The end of the trip was the bummer here. A nearly full train even south of Ft. Worth with a good crowd boarding for the southern end of the journey. On time performance, pleasant dome viewing and good diner. Then, Rosenberg, Texas, less than 50 miles west of Houston, and some joint trackage used by the SP and Santa Fe into the city. Bad track--a bouncing, jouncing ride in the high level coach at 35 or 40. But, that wasn't the worst of it. Although THE SUNSET uses that same stretch and going into the SP station at Houston would be no problem, SP's usual attitude has put the stop sign out for the LONE STAR at its Houston facilities. Result: continued use of a separate station, with all of its accompanying expenses. And use of a piece of terminal trackage across south Houston to reach it. A newly imposed slow order limits the train to a smashing 10 mph for 45 minutes or so and guarantees passenger frustration as well as an arrival at least 20 minutes late.

Even with the 20-minute-tardy arrival, there was plenty of time for a cab ride across town before the scheduled 9:50 pull-out of the SUNSET. Late 25 minutes, after a delay getting out of New Orleans, was the word. Not that bad for #1. The fairly recent (but before Amtrak) station building isn't adequate for this day of increased passenger loadings. More than 100 waiting to board jammed the waiting room and spilled outside on the platform.

A pair of Amtrak's new diesels headed a consist of baggage car, 4 high level chair cars, dorm-lounge, diner and 4 pullmans. We got out of town in the scheduled 25 minutes and I was soon in dreamland on the longest uninterrupted Amtrak segment of my journey.

The SUNSET should be daily by now, but the equipment problem seems to rear its ugly head again here. I I can certainly give it better grades than a year ago, when RTN's Peter Bretz and I rode it on the way to Mexico and were less than overwhelmed by the equipment and the delays. RTN's Paul Rayton wasn't impressed either at this time last year.

With a capacity of almost 400, #1 could use a full length lounge, rather than dorm-lounge, and a secondary eating facility of some type. Waits for meals were the rule and every lounge seat was taken most of the time. Even a bedroom lounge would help in easing the pressure. One pullman started running hot the second night, but it was apparently possible to move everyone out.

Morning saw us depart from Sanderson about 30 minutes down, then start thru a succession of heavy track work and freight meets which knocked us 65 minutes behind out of Alpine near the noon hour. But the segment from there to El Paso went with a minimum of trouble--with freight meets and track work exacting a 45-minute toll between El Paso and the next stop--Deming, New Mexico. As darkness fell we slowed for another meet, then gingerly passed the scene of a recent freight derailment. At least not recent enough to completely block the line for us. The day of desert running ended as we cleared Tucson, then Phoenix 1:40 behind. RTN's Peter Bretz would be waiting at Los Angeles in the morning. I hoped his wait wouldn't be overly long.

(continued on next page)

Given the SUNSET's less than distinguished on-time record, my doubts were justified, to be sure, but at the dawning, a pleasant surprise. It was hard to pinpoint our location at first when I peeked out in the morning, but when we eased thru Colton by 6am, I knew things had changed for the better. We made our Pomona stop at 6:20--10 minutes late but less than an hour out of L.A. Union Passenger Depot. It seemed impossible, but we were headed for a not only on-time, but early arrival, on the SUNSET, on the SP, on a schedule not lengthened since the time of SP's operation! We were in 13 minutes early. Yes, it can be done.

One day later found me boarding the Greyhound bus connection from Los Angeles to the SAN JOAQUIN at Bakersfield. Less than 20 others were doing the same, and most weren't going all the way to Oakland. A few others transferred from the half-hour late SOUTHWEST LIMITED in Pasadena. In spite of the delay, we reached Bakersfield just before the 11:30 departure time of the train. A quick exchange of passengers and baggage got us underway within a minute or so of schedule. A pair of E units in Amtrak colors pulled a baggage car, a trio of ex-SP coaches, and a counter-diner lounge once used as the secondary eating facility on the GOLDEN STATE. Those boarding in Bakersfield swelled the passenger count to over 50. The pattern of travel was such that a maximum load was reached about midway in the trip when almost all seats were taken. Hanford contributed an especially large loading for its size.

If almost everyone was avoiding the first coach, there was good reason on a typical hot summer day in the valley. Right from the start the air conditioning just didn't seem to be operating, tho the blower system was on. Pete Bretz was along for the trip and, not one to remain in the background, joined the conductor during the stop in Merced for an investigation of the controls under the car. A quick twist of a fuel supply valve feeding the separate motor which powers the air conditioning in those SP cars, and presto! cool air inside. A pity that it takes a passenger (even a knowledgeable one like Pete) to do something that the servicing people--paid with our tax money--should have done before the train left Bakersfield.

I was interested in the food service, as a 3-man crew served up cold food only--actually two handling the food and one the bar section. Three men to do the same thing that two or only one are called upon to do for larger loads of passengers in the Northeast. Even the new specialty food cars which serve airline-style hot meals as well as cold snacks are staffed by just two men. And unless my memory fails me, three--two men and a young lady--managed to provide hot meals on the EXPO 74 a few days later.

Timewise, no problems. At 70mph--the current speed limit--I would rate the Santa Fe track fair. We had no difficulty in maintaining the schedule; indeed we had to wait for time in a couple of places. Our meet with the opposite train was smooth--the wheels didn't stop rolling. We were ready to hit SP rails at Port Chicago at 4:50pm, the earliest time the train is permitted to enter SP territory. And as often is the case, I'm told, the SAN JOAQUIN eased to a stop at Oakland 10 minutes early. Another schedule where 10 minutes or so could be cut without problem, especially given a 90%+ on-time record so far.

* * *

It was a busy time at Oakland when the COAST STARLIGHT arrived on a Saturday evening--just 2 minutes late. A big exchange of passengers from a 17-car consist powered by a pair of new Amtrak units. A string of mostly ex-Santa Fe coaches with lunch counter diner spliced in followed the baggage car. Then full-length lounge, diner and 3 sleepers. My space was in the first sleeper, a companion to the one ridden on the INTER-AMERICAN (both were 10-6 cars built for the DENVER ZEPHYR in 1956).

The little card which greeted me in my room announcing passenger activities (such as feature films and complimentary morning coffee) gave evidence that this train is up on the priority list at l'Enfant Plaza, which well it should be.

Morning saw the Oregon mountains and mostly overcast skies which cleared by the time we reached Portland. The rear brakeman, an old pro near retirement

age, volunteered information and comments as I squeezed off a few pictures before breakfast. He said we'd be 20 to 25 minutes late at Eugene. He was right. We departed there 26 down and held our own into Albany in spite of a few miles of rather bad rail negotiated at reduced speed. Some track work here and there between Oakland and Portland on SP's part certainly wouldn't do any harm and might help the derailments which have plagued the line.

Portland--the end of SP trackage at 1:20, 15 minutes behind--not bad for the STARLIGHT. I counted nearly 100 passengers boarding. The run over the BN was pretty routine between Portland and Seattle. As on the SP, much of the double track would benefit from more regular visits by the track gangs. No significant delays, and a relatively smooth meet with the southbound STARLIGHT. I couldn't help but overhear the couple in the adjacent bedroom (who came all the way from Los Angeles) talking with another passenger about how they enjoyed the trip. Indeed, it was nice--quite trouble-free--especially compared with last winter. And it had been just a few days since the most recent detouring of the train because of a derailment. On this day, no such hassles--and arrival in Seattle but 10 minutes late.

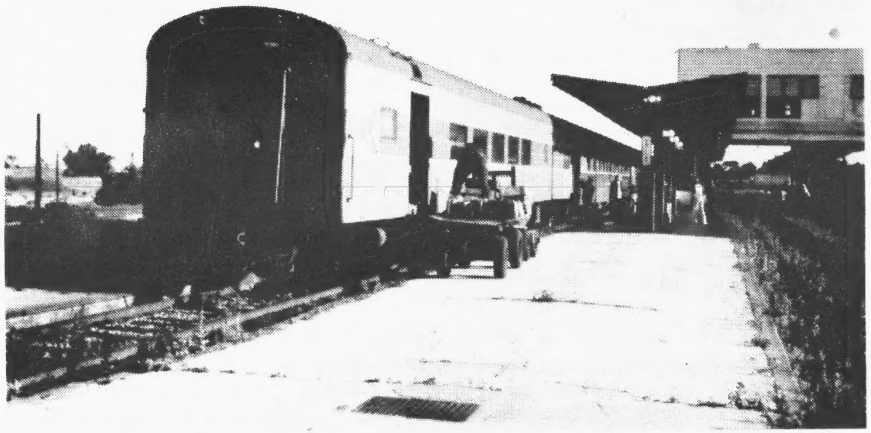
* * *

As I prepared to board EXPO 74 for Spokane and the fair on a Monday, I thought of the slow 8½-hour schedule and how the former EMPIRE BUILDER, when it used the Cascade Tunnel route to Spokane, covered the distance eastbound in about 7 hours. I though also of Amtrak's complaints about passenger loadings in the early weeks of the Expo run. There was a good crowd this day--130. It was apparently the largest number to that time, even tho it wasn't a weekend.

Another bad start. Last-minute equipment repairs delayed the departure of the southbound STARLIGHT. Its long consist blocked the EXPO equipment from reaching the station. It finally got moving some 80 minutes down, and our train--former SP articulated coach set, coach-diner and ex-Burlington dome coach--arrived. Departure, 30 minutes behind. A nice view from the dome going up the shore on a bright, clear day. Then inland toward the mountains. It wasn't long before we took a siding for our westbound counterpart at the cost of a few more minutes. Onward, upward thru the beautiful scenery followed by the 15-minute run at dome level in the blackness of THE tunnel.

Before long, another major problem. We ground to a halt and waited and waited --for about 45 minutes. Seems a track crew ran into some problems completing a project a couple miles ahead. Then we had to wait until a freight stopped on the other side of the job climbed up to our location and cleared the way. About halfway in the trip and already at least 75 minutes worth of delay. Yet we left Wenatchee about 50 minutes late and stopped briefly at Ephrata but 30 minutes down. By now we were out of the mountains and running fast (79 at times) on flat terrain. Any thought I had about poorly maintained track was out the window. No deteriorated stretches, no significant slow orders. Believe it or not we made up the entire 75 minutes plus and were in Spokane exactly on time. (The train is usually at least 10 minutes early.) I say whenever you can make up that much time on a 325-mile run, the schedule is overly padded. It can still be done in 7 hours. Seven and a half would be about right. That's one of the problems with the train. Another is the $19 one-way fare. Except for the delays, it was a scenic and pleasant trip enhanced by the dome viewing and a lack of problems with the equipment.

A delayed beginning also characterized my next segment--returning overnight to Seattle via the NORTH COAST HIAWATHA. A good crowd piled off when it arrived in Spokane 90 minutes behind. A brace of coaches, dome lounge, diner and a trio of sleepers in the consist--some of the cars unrefurbished. The Spokane stop consumed an overly-long 40 minutes, putting us 1:40 down as we moved out at 1:20am. Finally to bed, knowing that we probably would make up a lot of time with a good chance of making the 9:15 Greyhound from Seattle to Vancouver and my eastbound trip north of the border. (Word was that the delay was primarily caused by flooding in the Montana-North Dakota area.) *(concludes at top of page 16)*



The author photographed the INTER-AMERICAN loading at Dallas, where a new station is under construction.

We were nearing Everett when I headed to the diner in the morning--with arrival there one hour late. A quick bit of dome viewing along the water after a usual good Amtrak breakfast. While there, the passenger rep breezed in to thank the passengers for riding Amtrak and to invite them back. If this isn't standard procedure at the windup of long distance runs, it should be.

Seattle again, 50 minutes behind, 7½ hours after departure from Spokane. There was just enough time for the 10-minute dash by cab to Greyhound and the start of the Canadian phase of my rail adventure.

AMTRAK CAR 2241 "Natural Bridge" was seen on the BROADWAY LIMITED arriving Chicago on July 5, being used as a slumbercoach. This is an 11-double bedroom car..... AUTO-TRAIN HAS purchased sleeper "JP-200," the former New York Central sleeper "Eden Valley" and the car is presently being stored in the Rock Island coach yard in Chicago..... THE SHAWNEE LEFT Chicago July 5 with Amtrak E unit, CNW F unit, 3 CNW bilevel coaches, and Amtrak baggage-counter-lounge car 1710. Some observers expressed surprise that the bilevel cars could be used in conjunction with conventional equipment..... AMTRAK CAR 3329 has been refurbished and has been seen in the Midwest. This car doesn't yet appear in the Car Spotters Guide, and is ex-PC 7175 "John Adams." Car is being used as a lounge..... SOUTHERN RAILWAY CAR 2015 "Rappahannock River" made an unexpected trip to Chicago on train 58 from New Orleans on July 5, being on loan from Southern..... FORMER ROCK ISLAND sleepers "Steel City," "The Potomac," "Central Park" have been refurbished, in addition to "Air Force Academy" and are now in service..... FORMER ILLINOIS CENTRAL 10-6 sleeper "Clifton" is now in Amtrak service, being leased from Butterworth Tours. Car is refurbished..... TWO NEW AMTRAK 3000-hp locomotives are now on the ICG road for testing before being used between Chicago and New Orleans, and 6 more were scheduled to be delivered to ICG by July 4, according to B. J. Screws, ICG director of Amtrak operations.....

mixed train of thoughts

SOME TRAIN CONSISTS on the Fourth of July weekend: (railfans across the country were busy noting consists this week, and some were putting them together to try to get a consistent (no pun intended) picture of what Amtrak's running on its trains at one given moment this summer; so here are cars numbers of selected trains at Chicago.) July 6: PANAMA LTD #59: engines 617, 619; 1165, 1417, 9214, 8026, 5436, 4574, 3902, 5213, 4476, 7002, ICG 50. BLACK HAWK #371: RDC's 31, 30, 15. BROADWAY LIMITED #40: engines 593, 598, 227; 1058, 1001, 2002, 2003, 4442, 4555, 4563, 5659, 3401, 8802, 8801, 2241, 2787, 2767, 2801, 3204, 5268. ST. CLAIR #362: engine 314; ATSF 3664, 5649, 3920, 5616, 6052, 5004. WOLVERINE #361: engines 311, 319; 3871, 3921, 4840, 5218, 7002, 5210, 5608, 1600. LONE STAR #15: engines 505, 507; 1167, 9920, 9942, 9933, 3380, 1491, 2720, 2367, 9252. SHAWNEE #391: engines 203, CNW 4075-C; CNW 703, CNW 702, 1710. EMPIRE BUILDER #8: engines 563, 532; NP 207, NP 224, GN 1204, 2030, 9560, 9464, 4880, NP 588, 9801, NP 458, NP 364, 2154, UP 1605, 371, "Benton." EMIPRE BUILDER #7: engines 352, 156, 105; NP 226, NP 258, NP 429, BN 333, GN 1329, 9479, 4506, 4589, 9363, BN 1151, 2611, 9224, UP 1611, UP 1437, 9202. SOUTHWEST LIMITED #3: engines 523, 508, 510; 1057, 9991, 9906, 9935, 9982, 9975, 9948, 9961, 9900, 2213, 2814, 3382 (replacing dome lounge damaged in derailment), 8070, 2757, ATSF "Regal Dome," 2750. Rock Island QUAD CITIES ROCKET #5-9 (all R.I. equipment): engines 643, 655; 334, "Dream Lake," 346, 349, 337, 342, 411, "Big Ben." July 7: ILLINOIS ZEPHYR #346: engines 349, CNW 4088-A; 9601, CNW 701, CNW 704. JAMES WHITCOMB RILEY #50: engines 213, C&O 5895; 5402, 4842, 4812, 8116, 2017, 1307. All the above numbers not identified by a railroad abbreviation are Amtrak numbers.....

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AMTRAK CAR 3310, ex-SP French Quarter Lounge from the SUNSET was seen on an ICG storage track ready to be sent to Woodcrest Shops with a sign reading "Home for Heavy Repairs"..... SEVERE LOCOMOTIVE SHORTAGE is hitting BN. On July 5 & 7 E-8 units BN 9972 and 9973 were seen in freight service in the Chicago area..... FORMER IC SLEEPERS "Baton Rouge," "Clifton" and "Benton", now owned by Butterworth Tours, are leased to Amtrak and are currently running on the EMPIRE BUILDER..... BN BUSINESS CAR "Missouri River" was seen deadheading to Aurora, Illinois on July 7 on the rear of a commuter train..... EX-CNW BILEVEL COACH Amtrak #9616 has recently emerged from the shops and is now running semi-regularly on the ILLINOIS ZEPHYR..... SOUTHERN RAILWAY HAS been running passenger train ads under the theme: "We treat our passengers like we make money on them." Text says that Southern doesn't make anything hauling passengers, but they get good treatment anyway. An overheight locomotive seems to turn into a Victorian house at the rear, filled with happy faces. Text concludes stressing Southern's high freight earnings. Will the accountants charge that to the passenger or freight promotion budgets?.....

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THE FRENCH DECISION to build a new 165mph exclusive passenger train railroad from Paris to Lyons was based partially on findings that energy requirements per seat mile were 40% higher for Turbo trains than for straight electrics. French said energy costs were now 12% of total, and that rising fuel prices would increase that to 16% within a few years, making electrification cheaper in the long run..... CANADIAN NATIONAL EXPERIENCED "terrific growth" in passenger patronage in 1974, newly-elected CN president Robert Bandeen told the press on a cross-country tour in June, and is considering purchase of newly-manufactured passenger equipment instead of footing bigger maintenance bills on older cars. He said CN is evaluating LRC-type equipment and increased use of the TurboTrain, the latter possibly on a thru Windsor-Quebec City run..... TRACK UPGRADING PROGRAM on the Chicago-Milwaukee line, says one report, was halted after the Canadian Turbo wreck & Amtrak's decision not to run Turbos on it, so speed limit is still 70mph. When new Turbos come, it's likely some will go on the route, and that track upgrading will resume, presumably with Amtrak's money.....

LUCKY AMTRAK STORY that didn't make the papers, and just as well: when UP freight derailment on BN's double-track Portland-Seattle main this spring interrupted Amtrak service for two days, here's what happened: northbound UP freight was running left hand, afternoon northbd MT. RAINIER running right hand, and only a short distance behind the UP train when boxcars piled up, blocking both tracks. The engineer of the MT. RAINIER saw the blocksignal turn red just out of the corner of his eye an instant before passing, and bigholed the equipment, stopping only a few feet short of the freight wreckage! (Passengers were bused to the southbound train, and both units reversed, returning to their starting points)..... A STUB TRAIN runs from Minneapolis to Chicago when the NORTH COAST HIAWATHA is late (delayed 3-5 hours by bridge washout in Montana--see last issue), usually consisting of SDP40F engine, mail car, 2 coaches and a parlor car, but no diner or lounge..... THE PANAMA LIMITED arrived in New Orleans on June 1 at 11:30am for its first on-time arrival of 1974 at that city, and the first time since well back into 1973..... THE NEBRASKA ZEPHYR, formerly the TWIN CITIES ZEPHYR, stored in the Denver depot, has been sold to a Kansas City banker, Alexander Barket, who also owns one set of the original DENVER ZEPHYR equipment..... THE OLD PARLOR car, actually a lounge, that ran on the DEL MONTE up until its 1971 demise, has been running on the SAN FRANCISCO ZEPHYR, replacing one of the domes that are being shopped. The car is numbered 3501.....

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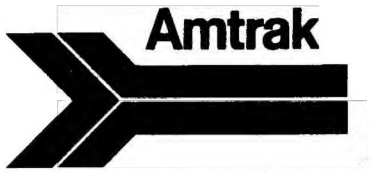
THE LEAD EDITORIAL in Modern Railroads for June gave Amtrak a pat on the back, and a slight kick to some of Amtrak's contractor railroads. Said MR: "Since Amtrak is obviously here to stay, and since it is greatly to the railroad industry's interest that it be successful, we find it amazing that some railroads continue to oppose Amtrak, either directly or indirectly. Dog-in-the-manger attitudes will do neither the railroads nor their industry any good. They should shape up"..... ANOTHER MEDIA REPORT on Amtrak of importance is a 2-page article in U.S. News & World Report for July 1. It focusses upon Amtrak's plans for new equipment and is generally optimistic, but ends with a thunky statement by an unidentified official: "This isn't going to be a 'railroad of the fiture' by 1980. There won't be 500mph trains or Victorian opulence. But, by then, you will have a passenger-train system that works, a substantial amount of new equipment of many types, better stations, better ticketing and better attitudes." Good grief! Do we have to wait six more years for that? What would have happened had we geared up for World War II at that pace?..... THE EXPO 74 train is being killed by Amtrak, claim riders who have investigated it. The fare is too high--higher than the bus, which is faster as well--, and the schedule brings people into Spokane too late for anything but checking into a motel. The returning schedule, leaving at 8am, requires one to pay another day's lodging for no useful purpose. One writer to a newspaper suggests an 8am Seattle departure and a 12:30pm departure from Spokane. Also, there are complaints of poor equipment and unwashed windows, etc..... TWO DIXIE LIMITED steam train excursions will run out of Richmond, VA on August 3 & 4. Write for info to "Dixie Limited," Box 8583, Richmond, VA 23226..... JAMES WHITCOMB RILEY, train 50, of July 4 was 9 hours late and finally annulled at Charlottesville, VA and passengers bused to Washington. PC detour plus engine failures were the culprits. The final insult came when the train could not enter Charlottesville because of freight train interference. Train normally runs 2-6 hours late..... NORTH COAST HIAWATHA west from Chicago on one mid-May day was delayed when the newly-refurbished diner became unusually rough riding. Crews checked and found the springs had fallen from some of the trucks..... THOSE FOUR EX-NP dome sleepers which had not been redone into "Lounge-in-the-sky" configuration by NP have now been done so by Amtrak. Three were converted by Auto-Liner, losing a duplex bedroom under the dome in the process. The fourth was converted by BN's Como Shops in St. Paul..... SENATOR JACOB JAVITS has introduced a bill to require Amtrak to begin rail service to every major city within 4 years, would allow a state to help finance Amtrak service by paying 1/3, not 2/3 of the deficit, and would require designation of 5 routes from urban areas to recreation areas, including laying new lines if necessary.....

Urban-Suburban Transit

A STRIKE OF AC Transit employees in the East San Francisco Bay Area starting July 1 has played havoc with commuting. As of this writing (June 10) the strike remains unsettled. AC workers were unsuccessful in two attempts to shut down BART as well. Earlier, a 1-day wildcat strike of Golden Gate Transit drivers left San Francisco-Marin commuters without transportation... IN BOSTON, THE MBTA's new $40 million South Cove maintenance, repair and storage facility was dedicated on June 25... THE DOT HAS awarded $33 million from money previously earmarked for highways to New York's transit fund to replace buses and modernize subway cars. This is the first time such funds have been so transferred at the rrequest of a local authority... REGIONAL TRANSPORTATION AUTHORITY in Chicago area is constitutional, ruled the Illinois Supreme Court recently. The ruling clears the way for the RTA to begin functioning... NEW DETROIT PLAN calls for 75 miles of rail line and another 175 miles of bus lanes. Some 37 miles of the rail system would be subway and 10 aerial. Estimated cost is $2.05 billion... CLEVELAND URBAN TRANSPORTATION Task Force has recommended a 10-year, $1 billion program for the area. Included are extensions to the existing rapid transit system; new lines to suburban points; and extension of Shaker Heights streetcar/rapid transit service beyond the existing terminals of both Shaker lines... Toronto's North York dial-a-bus experiment, financed by the Ontario provincial government, has crashed in a sea of extended deficits and opposition-party oratory in the legislature. Having racked up a 9-month loss of $616,-073, the 33 buses are for sale; and members of the opposition Liberal Party have been using the incident to make calls for resumed freeway construction, on the grounds "transit won't work." One dial-a-bus district remains in operation for awhile... NEW ARTICULATED STREETCARS being built by Boeing Vertol for the SF Muni and the Boston MBTA may be delayed. The electrical subscontractor's motors have not met performance tests, and there are troubles with thetrucks. The announced delay is 90 days, but insiders think the new streetcars may be much later than 3 months in arriving... TROLLEY COMEBACK UNDERWAY? At a community meeting on Seattle's Queen Anne Hill where revival of Trolley routes up the hill was discussed, 124 of the 125 persons present approved the Metro plan to restore service on two routes which had been converted to diesel by the previous management in 1970... A GALLUP POLL shows almost 75% of Americans in favor of retaining the present 55mph highway speed limit. Traffic deaths over the 4-day Fourth of July weekend were lower than previous similar weekends because of the lower speed...

RIDE ON



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